

Fr. Rudy's Reflections  
The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe  
November 24, 2024

### **I Am the Alpha and the Omega**

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

As we commemorate the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, we are reminded of Christ's eternal reign, from the beginning to the end—"the Alpha and the Omega." This solemn feast, celebrated on the Sunday before the first week of Advent, invites us to reflect on Christ's kingship over all creation. It also marks the close of the liturgical year and prepares our hearts for the new one to come.

In our archdiocese, today we are also celebrating "Together Sunday," a special moment for Catholics to return to Mass and rediscover the joy of worshipping together. It is an invitation to welcome one another as we prepare to enter the Advent season. At this critical time, when we face life's many challenges, we are called to embrace the gift of the Eucharist as the means to draw closer to Christ and each other.

Unfortunately, the reality is that many Catholics do not attend Mass regularly. The October count in our Archdiocese of Cincinnati reveals that Mass attendance has decreased by 29% over the past ten years and 38% over the last fifteen years. This Together Sunday, let us rally and rekindle our community spirit. This is an opportunity to begin anew, as many Families of Parishes are embarking on the "Culture" phase of the Beacons of Light initiative. Together we can foster a culture of proactive outreach, one that not only brings people back to Mass but also strengthens our relationships with the Lord and one another.

As St. Padre Pio once said, "Every Holy Mass, heard with devotion, produces in our souls marvelous effects, abundant spiritual and material graces which we ourselves, do not know."

The Eucharist is our source of grace, the true presence of Christ that gives us strength, peace, and hope. This Together Sunday, let us welcome all with open arms and hearts. Let us embrace Christ through the Eucharist and deepen our faith as a community, preparing for the beautiful journey that Advent promises.

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Rudy